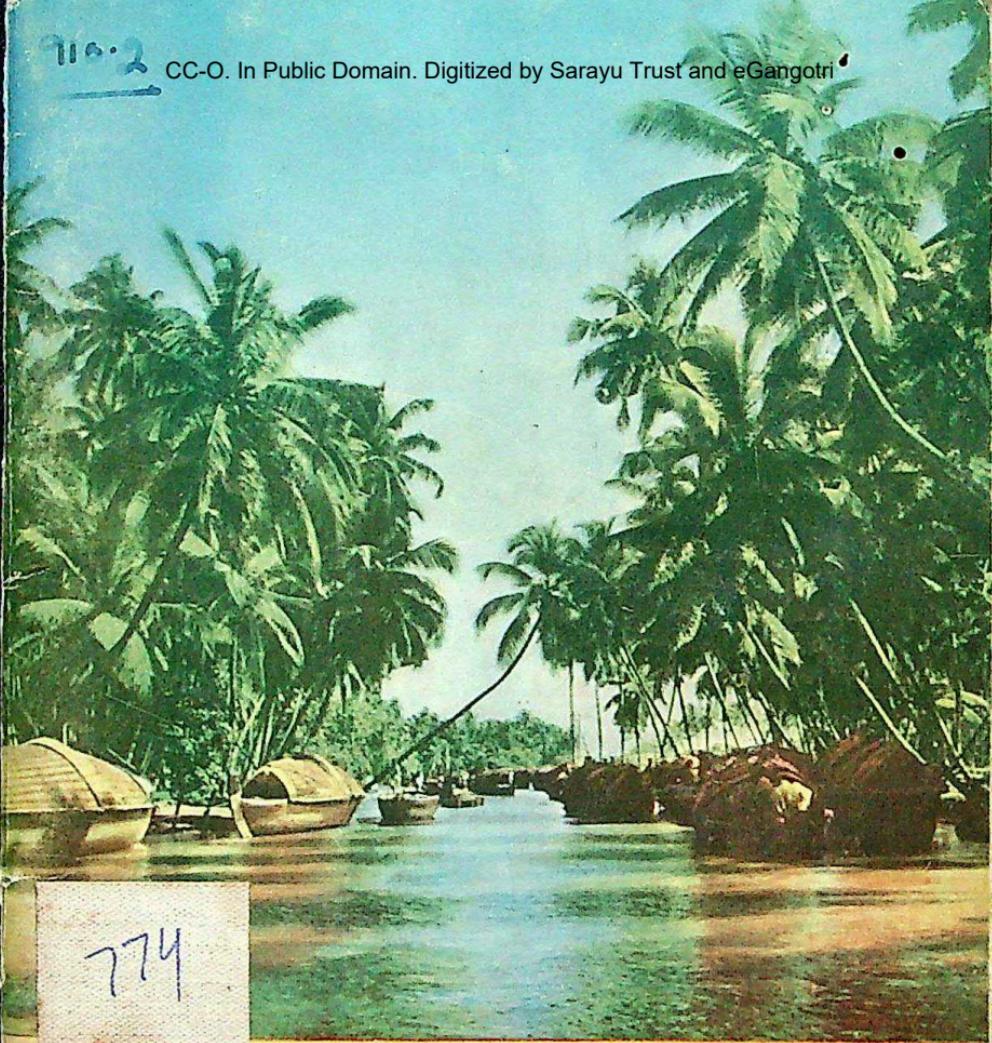


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Kerala



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UP State Museum, Lucknow

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Kathakali dancers

INTRODUCTION

THREE are few places in India and perhaps in the East which have won such unmixed admiration from tourists as Kerala, "the treasure land of the East". Few have exercised such a magic spell on the mind and heart of travellers from time immemorial. Thousands of years ago, the beautiful ships of the Phoenicians laden with gold and other precious cargo arrived here, sailing proudly on the dancing billows of the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea and returned home carrying pepper, spices and ivory. One of the ports of Kerala was described by Pliny as the 'first emporium of India'. That was in the first century A.D. and the port has now been identified as Kodungalloor (Cranganore.) The tiny coastal village of Puvar in the south is held to be ancient 'Ophir', where King Solomon sent his trading vessels. Many foreigners, including the Grecians, the Romans, the Chinese, the Danish, the Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the English had set up their colonies in Kerala. There is at Kodungalloor a temple founded by the Roman colonists in honour of Augustus. More remarkable still is the fact that the land was noted for the religious tolerance of its inhabitants and many a victim of religious persecution from other lands found a ready asylum here.

This land is indeed a rich treasure land—the poet may delight in the charms of nature in their exquisite setting, the intrepid adventurer may embark on a mountain-climbing expedition or forest exploration, or indulge in sea bathing or proceed on a delightful cruise over lagoons



Palm-fringed backwaters

or rivers or simply go a-fishing with the certainty of a good catch. Here, again, there are rare specimens of old art and architecture, monuments, inscriptions and paintings created centuries ago but preserved for purposes of research and study. The devout pilgrim finds his shrines here and the potential entrepreneur his 'fresh woods and pastures new'.

Palm-fringed, lagoon-studded, etched against a backdrop of lush green mountains, Kerala sprawls along the West Coast of India towards the apex of the peninsula. Mountainous in parts, with peaks rising to eight thousand feet, the fertile land is green with luxuriant vegetation. Even the sand on the seashore yields precious monazite.

A vast majority of Malayalam-speaking people have been brought together by the formation of the State of Kerala. Tamil is the other language spoken here. Cut off by a mountain barrier from Madras State, except at its extreme southern tip, Kerala has always enjoyed a cultural and social distinctness of its own.

Trivandrum is the capital of the State, which has nine districts, *viz.*, Trivandrum, Quilon, Alleppey, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore. The names of their headquarter towns are the same as those which the respective districts bear. The main crops are rice, tapioca and sweet-potato, the chief cash crops being coconut, arecanut, tea, coffee, cardamom, rubber, pepper, ginger, lemon grass, sesame, groundnut, cashewnut and turmeric. The climate is tropical and the rainfall heavy.

Kerala is a land of contrasts. Unending rows of coconut palms; the grey anonymous farmsteads with their palm-leaf thatched roofs suggesting Chinese influence of an earlier age; and the more recent structures, in the major urban areas, reveal the cross-play of native elegance and streamlined modernity.

Polychrome, the warm, elemental red of the earth in the hinterland, vies with the rich, green shrubbery. Towards the coast, the soil is sandy.

Up in the north is the High Range, locally known as the Anaimalais--the Elephant Hills--six miles long and three miles wide. The Cardamom Hills, with their highest

peak soaring up to 7,900 feet, lie below the High Range. Kerala is the original home of cardamom.

These mountain ranges offer picturesque scenery, hills and dales, the sweet whisper of mountain streams cascading over boulder-strewn beds, trees crisscrossed with creepers and brilliantly-hued orchids. It is the home of wild herds of big game, and of the huge mahseer in the upland rivers.

Plucking tea leaves. Kerala is known for its tea plantations.



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HISTORY

Kerala, as it exists today, came into being as a result of the reorganization of States in November 1956. Speaking roughly, its boundaries comprise most of the former territories of the State of Travancore-Cochin and of the Malabar district, which was previously included in Madras State. Its 13·5 million people live in an area of 15,035 sq. miles.

Originally, the area comprising Travancore was called Srivazhum Kode (the abode of prosperity), later Thiruvithankodu. Under the British it came to be known as Travancore.

The country was once dotted with petty principalities ruled by several independent chieftains. After protracted struggles, the numerous mutually-warring principalities were all conquered and fused into one territorial unit by Raja Martanda Varma (1726-58 A.D.), who gave the State administrative cohesion by introducing a well-knit system of government. The capital was shifted from Padmanabhapuram to Trivandrum.

The region was known to the outside world from ancient times. Ships from many countries touched its ports to trade in spices, ivory and sandalwood and sometimes even peacocks! The earliest amongst the trading visitors were the Phoenicians. The port of Ophir, which the ships of King Solomon visited about 1000 B.C. is believed to have been the village of Puvar, south of Trivandrum.

There was extensive trade between Greece and Rome and the sea-ports of western India. The Chinese carried on a flourishing trade with Quilon. Chinese fishing nets are still used widely in several fishing villages of Kerala.

Later came the Danes, followed by the Portuguese and the Dutch; and, last of all, the English East India Company. The Danes are known to have run a factory at Colachel.

In 1516 the Rani of Quilon signed a treaty with the Portuguese. The treaty governed trade relations and provided for mutual assistance in the event of enemy attack. And such of the Rani's subjects who wished to become Christians were given the freedom to embrace the new faith.

All went well for a time, but when Captain Rodriguez began building a fort at Quilon, the apprehension of Arab traders knew no bounds. Often, their machinations caused rifts between the Rani and the Portuguese. Finally, the Rani laid siege to the fort, but lost after protracted hostilities. The treaty that followed gave the Portuguese commercial supremacy, soon to be challenged with the advent of the Dutch.

The Dutch East India Company made its appearance in 1602. By subtle diplomacy, it won the confidence of the feudatory chiefs of the West Coast where their settlements soon began to spring up. It was a hard blow to the Portuguese; their trade began to dwindle; and one

by one, they had to give up what were once their thriving trade centres.

Although, primarily, their mission was one of trade, the Dutch seem to have later followed a policy of interference. Sword and trade occasionally got mixed up. In this gamble—interference in domestic issues in a bid to retain trade supremacy—the Dutch lost heavily. In 1753, the Dutch finally signed a treaty with the Travancore Raja. By this time, the English East India Company had actively entered the spice trade of Travancore.

At Anjengo, some twenty miles south of Quilon, the English East India Company set up their first settlement in 1684. Astutely, the English traders forged friendly relations with the Travancore Raja. In 1795, the Travancore Raja signed a treaty with the English East India Company. Five years later, Colonel C. Macaulay was appointed the first British Resident in Travancore.

The rise of Cochin as a distinct entity followed the break up of the kingdom of Cheraman Perumal who is believed to have given up his throne and left for Mecca to embrace Islam. This is said to have happened in 825 the year which marks the beginning of Kollam era still in vogue in Kerala. Little is known about the subsequent history of Cochin till the advent of the Portuguese who built a fort at Cochin in 1503 and later helped the Rajas in their wars with the Zamorin. The Dutch, who came later, ousted the Portuguese from the

town of Cochin in 1663 and secured trading rights from the Raja. After about a century, when the Dutch power began to decline, the Zamorin of Calicut invaded the Cochin State which repelled the invader with the help of the Travancore Raja. The invasions of Hyder Ali of Mysore and his son Tipu Sultan followed. The State remained a tributary to Mysore till 1791, when the Raja entered into a treaty with the British. Under the treaty, he agreed to pay tribute to the Company in return for protection.

Malabar for its part remained divided among numerous chieftains of whom Kollatiri of Chirrakkal in the north and the Zamorin of Calicut in the south were conspicuous. Following Vasco da Gama's landing in Calicut in 1498, the Portuguese established trading centres in Malabar. With the arrival of the Dutch, the French and the English, Malabar became a scene of rivalry among European powers for trade and territory. It was repeatedly invaded by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. The treaty of Seringapatam, in 1792, brought the war between British and Tipu Sultan to an end, and Malabar finally passed into the hands of the British.

PEOPLE

Despite foreign contacts extending over a period of centuries, the customs and manners of the people of Kerala have remained basically unchanged. While they received and assimilated new trends, the people have retained much of their old values and refinements.

Great religious leaders have lived and worked in this region. Sankara, one of the greatest of India's religious thinkers, was born at Kaladi. St. Thomas, one of the disciples of Christ, it is believed, preached in this area, and drew converts to the Christian faith. St. Francis Xavier spent about three months here in 1544, travelling from Cape Comorin to Quilon. The little chapel at Kottar is supposed to have been built by him.

Kerala is the home of historic shrines, temples and synagogues, which draw thousands of visitors.

A treasury of ancient culture and folklore, Kerala is the home of simple, hospitable and enlightened people. It claims the highest percentage of literacy in India. Simple in their dress, both men and women here are normally clothed in white.

Once a martial race, the Nair community of Kerala has taken to peaceful vocations. Before Aryan influence or the religion of the Brahmins had touched Kerala, the Nairs, believed to be the original inhabitants of the area, had evolved a distinctive pattern of life.

The custom of reckoning kinship, descent, succession and inheritance in the female line is an interesting feature of life in Kerala. We find here matrilineal groups whose succession is determined by Marumakkathayam. Among Marumakkathayam Hindus, the family is matriarchal, i.e., it traces its descent from a common ancestress. The *tarawad*, as the joint family is called, consists of

brothers and sisters and the descendants of the latter along the female line. The eldest male member is called *Karanavan* (originator). In such a system, though wives and children of the male members have no special position, a *Karanavan* may be allowed to bring his wife and children in the *tarawad*. The married male members of the family usually visit their wives at the house of the latter. But if they feel that they can be self-supporting, living apart from *tarawad*, they settle down with their wives independently. But a *tarawad* is split up only when a partition takes place with the consent of all members. Today, old *tarawads* are being split up, the common property being apportioned between the members of the joint family. A bias against the matriarchal system of inheritance has been apparent in recent years, giving way, often imperceptibly, to the patriarchal family system.

Old *tarawads* of Nairs have a distinctive architecture of their own. The thick wooden doors and door-frames are often embellished with rich carvings and brass fittings.

Approximating to the purest Aryan type are the Namboodiris, the priestly Brahmin class of Kerala. Famous alike for their scholarship and wit, they lead quiet, simple lives, deriving their income mainly from the land or temples or from religious ceremonies they are entitled to perform. Namboodiri homes are called *illams*.

The joint family system prevails here, too, but with this difference: till recently, only the eldest son could take a caste wife, the others being conventionally ordained to seek

matrimonial ties with communities like the Kshatriyas or Nairs, their progeny having no right to the *illam* property. Namboodiri women used to observe purdah. But the community as a whole is changing its outlook and vocations. Many of them are found today in most of the modern callings.

Mainly engaged in coconut cultivation and agriculture is another Hindu community called Ezhavas. From this community has come one of the great Hindu religious teachers of modern times, Sri Narayana Guru Swami. A social reformer and religious leader at the same time, he proclaimed a simple faith: "One Caste, One Religion, One God". At Varkala, north of Trivandrum, is the Sivagiri Mutt, where this saint entered into final *samadhi* in 1928. His religious teachings are propagated by the Sri Narayana Dharma Sangham, an order of monks set up by his disciples. The lay disciples have a far more influential organization, the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalan Yogam, which has come to be one of the biggest communal organizations fully representative of the Ezhavas.

Christians form an important community in Kerala. Indeed, Christianity developed numerically more in this part of India than anywhere else during the early centuries of the Christian era.

One of the earliest centres of Christian influence in Kerala is Quilon, which again is its oldest seat in India. Marco Polo, who visited the area in 1293 A.D., refers to the Nestorian Christians and Jews he had met there.

Kerala has a small population of Jews. Some came with the ships of King Solomon. Others, displaced from Jerusalem after the destruction of the second temple, made their home at Cranganore. Here again, trouble soon arose. Muslim traders attacked their colonies in 1524, and burned their synagogues. Surviving colonies migrated to Cochin and some to Parur.

It is not known when exactly the Muslim faith was introduced into Kerala. It is certain that it came in the wake of trade contacts with Arabia. In the fourteenth century, Quilon is stated to have had five mosques.

Archaeological finds around Mavelikkara and Alleppey seem to suggest that this part of the country, too, was once under Buddhist influence. Several images of the Buddha have been discovered in this region. And one temple and its annual festival at Chettikulangarai, in the suburbs of Mavelikkara, is suggestive of Chinese influence.

To the anthropologist, South and Central Kerala offer a very interesting field of study. The area around Kumili is inhabited by hill-tribes, whose customs and manners still arouse scientific curiosity.

One of the tribes is called Pandarams. Nomadic in their habits, they are expert hunters, using bows and arrows and other primitive weapons with extreme dexterity. Short and stocky, the Pandarams live on jungle produce. They make a home out of the caves or the hollows of trees. Often they barter jungle produce like honey and wax for salt and matches.

In the Cardamom Hills is found another tribe called Uralis. They are more advanced than the Pandarams. You can see them occasionally in the plains at the village markets.

They build their houses with bamboo and forest grass. Unlike the Pandarams, they are agriculturists and raise paddy which is bartered for cloth. No Urali would stir out of his home without his favourite chopping knife, a multipurpose weapon, in his hands. Half the year they live on rice, the other half on roots and herbs. They bury their dead; and at the funeral, every kinsman has to put a piece of cloth on the grave. Great believers in black magic and allied rituals, they rely more on these than medicine for the cure of bodily ills.

Another hill-tribe found in Kerala is Ullatans. Whether in spearing fish or using a cross-bow, they are, like the Uralis, expert marksmen. It is a thrilling experience to watch them catch crocodiles with an iron hook wrapped up in a bait.

Chance plays a large part in the wedlock of an Ullatan. The girl sits alone in a palm-leaf hut, while all the eligibles seeking her hand dance around the hut, thrusting bamboo poles into it. After this circular dance has gone on for some time, the girl seizes one of the bamboo poles thrust into the hut. The youth is her chosen beau.

In the case of the Mudrans, another hill-tribe, the bill-hook is the chief weapon. With that they can, with

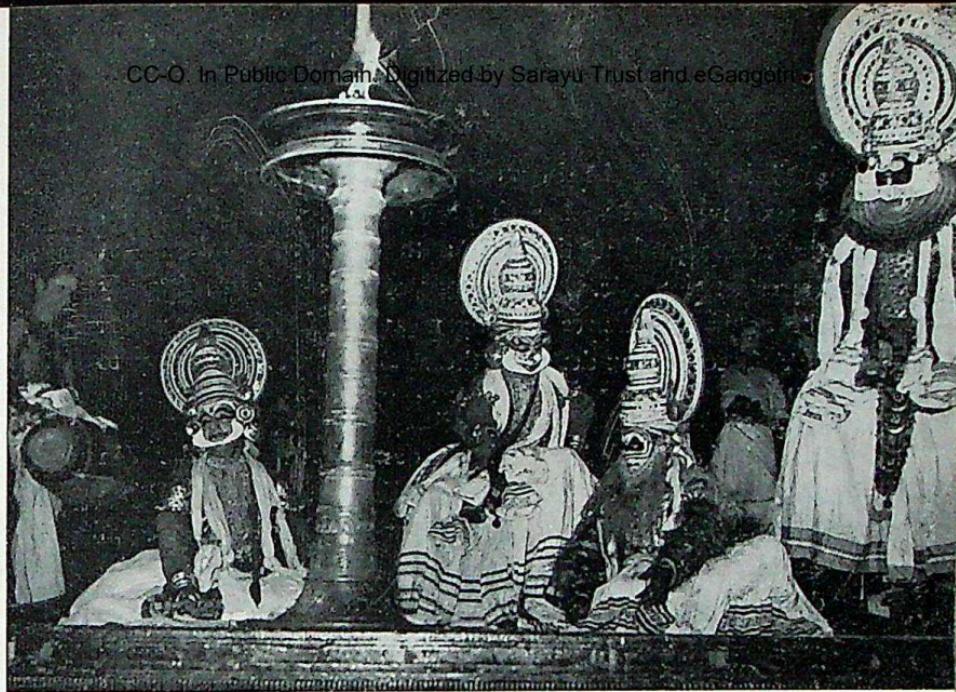
amazing skill, do anything from tilling the fields for paddy to building their bamboo huts.

Almost companionate marriage prevails amongst the Mudrans. Once the parents approve of a match, the boy and the girl go and live in some cave all by themselves. After a few weeks, they come back and announce their decision. In case of disagreement, both are free to seek further matrimonial prospects.

In the vast areas of dense forest growth, these hill-tribes are of invaluable help, if a *shikar* is ever planned. These are the guides who know every inch of the way. Living in close proximity to wild life, these people know the habits of animals, where they take cover, and how they can be trapped. In the jungle, you couldn't ask for a trustier guide than one of the members of these tribes.

DANCE

Kathakali: Culturally, Kerala presents a pageant unlike anything seen elsewhere in India. It is the birth-place of Kathakali, the famous pantomime dance-drama. In this dance art, no word is spoken by the actors, but facial expressions and hand gestures called *mudras* narrate the stories. Women rarely take part in Kathakali, so their place is taken by teenage boys. The Kathakali dance-drama, which depicts stories from the two great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, is a notable contribution to India's cultural heritage.



A scene from Kathakali, the famous dance-drama of Kerala. The flickering flame on the stage creates the right atmosphere for the performance.

The Kathakali art takes years of training to master. 'Catch 'em young' is the usual motto. While in his teens, the Kathakali aspirant is put through the paces of supple body movements. An elaborate system of physical exercises and massage are the initial step. Then come facial expressions, capturing the various *bhavas* or moods, such as love, pity, wonder, scorn, hatred, anger, fear. Lastly, the *mudras* or hand gestures, sixty-four in all, are taught.

To the intricacies of gesture-language are added elaborate head-dress and make-up. A full Kathakali piece, portraying one story, may take anything from eight to ten hours, starting early after night-fall and lasting right

until the dawn. In the mellow light of huge, wick-burning brass lamps and with a simple cotton cloth for a curtain, the actors perform the drama to the accompaniment of verses set to music. Each word of these is interpreted by the actor in gestures and by means of facial expressions. For those who understand the *mudras*, the story is easy to follow.

Tullal: It is another dance-form popular in Kerala. The most lively form is the Ottan Tullal; Ottan means "running", Tullal, "jumping". A dance of quick movements, it tells stories from the *Puranas*, the dancer using both foot-work and gestures to elucidate the verses he sings. He is assisted in the dance by a drummer. The Ottan Tullal dancer wears a skirt of broad ribbons and an ornamental headdress. Occasionally, the dancer has an opportunity to fling a witty sally at the audience.

Today, Tullal is not only popular, but it has also given Malayalam poetry a flexible metre.

Originally, both Kathakali and Tullal owed much to *Chakkiyarkuthu*, an earlier form of story-telling, with plenty of scope for racy narrative, vivid gestures and sharp witticism.

Mohiniattam: Amongst the other dance-forms of this area is the Mohiniattam. *Mohini*, the temptress, is a recurring theme in Hindu Puranic lore while *Attam* means dance.

It is a seductive dance performed by a woman dancer, sensuous in its appeal. In dance technique, Mohiniattam

lies somewhere between Kathakali and Bharata Natyam. Lyrical in the extreme, its key-note is coquetry. The symmetrical patterns of emotion flow in balanced nuances, with smooth foot-work, somewhat quicker body movements and special music. Watch, too, for what goes on under the eye-brows of a Mohiniattam danseuse.

In the realm of fine arts, Kerala is the home of the Ravi Varma School of oil painting. Many of Ravi Varma's paintings are on view at the Chitralaya in Trivandrum.

HANDICRAFTS

Kerala holds the pride of place in ivory work. Ivory carvers here can produce anything from a delicate cigarette case to the most elaborately carved figures.

Kerala is equally well known for its lace work. Aranmula Kannadi—the metal mirrors made in the village of Aranmula, near Thiruvella—still rank as one of the finest of curios. So, too, are the gold and silver brocaded fabrics of Kottar. A wide variety of articles like boxes and buttons and ash trays of steel with silver inlay work is produced by outstanding craftsmen. Art in industry is to-day evidenced in the pottery and ceramic products of Kerala.

FESTIVALS

Kerala has a host of festivals which are as varied and interesting as its vegetation and landscape. Dance and music figure prominently in the festivals which are

exceedingly colourful and attractive. The State observes most of the festivals of all-India importance, and among the local festivals *Onam* is the most important.

Onam, an occasion for rejoicing is celebrated against a setting of lush green vegetation in August/September. This picturesque harvest festival gives people four days of colour, feasting, boat racing, song and dance.

On the eve of *Thiruonam*, the second and most important day of the festival, Raja Mahabali, a legendary hero of the Puranas, is supposed to visit his kingdom. Every home is bright and shining in preparation of his royal visit. Visits are paid and gifts exchanged among friends and relatives.

At many places, caparisoned elephants take part in spectacular processions. A magnificent display of fireworks marks the end of festivities.

In villages, appreciative crowds gather on the green where colourfully dressed Kathakali dancers enact the well-loved stories of epic heroes and virtuous women.

The *Vallomkali** (boat race) is one of the main attractions of Onam and is best seen at Aranmulai and Kottayam. About a hundred oarsmen row huge and graceful *odees* (fast boat). Oars dip and flash to the rhythm of drums and cymbals in each boat. The songs are generally typical in character and concern people well

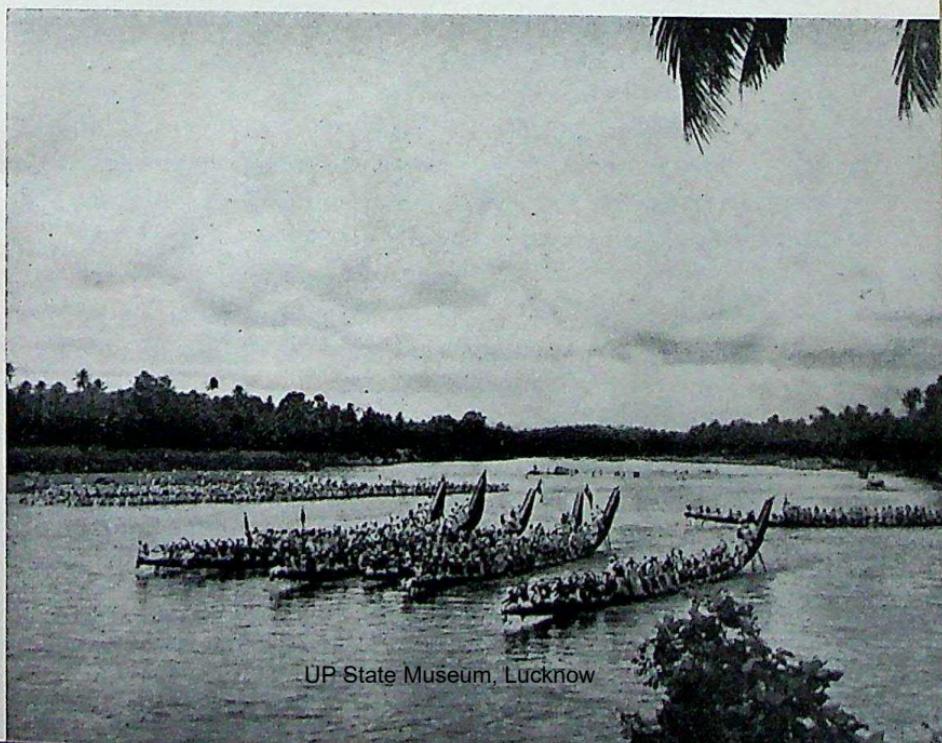
**Vallom*—boat; *kali*—play.

known in Kerala. Above each boat gleam scarlet silk umbrellas, their number denotes the affluence of the family owning the boat. Gold coins and tassels hang from the umbrellas.

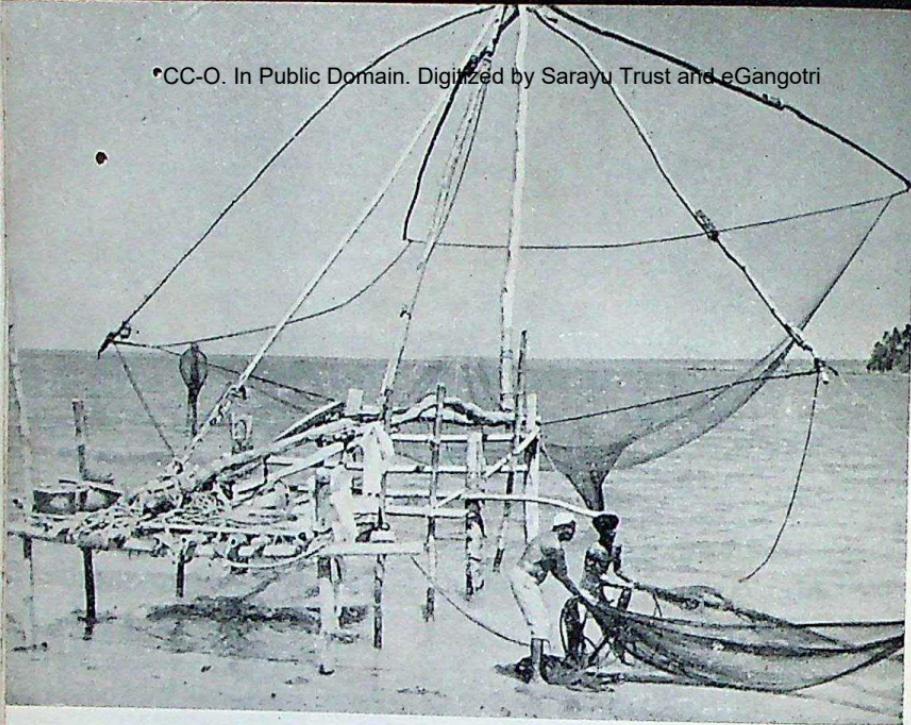
In the evenings, pretty girls perform the *Kyekottikali* (the clapping dance) in the open, dancing around the traditional brass lamp. Intricate patterns of flower petals are made on the grass forming a flower carpet for the dance.

Pooram: It falls in April/May and is celebrated with great enthusiasm at Trichur in Vadakkunathan Temple

The boat race at Aranmulai—one of the main attractions of *Onam* festival



UP State Museum, Lucknow



A Chinese fishing net. In India this device for fishing is used only in Kerala.

where thousands of people assemble to celebrate it. An elephant procession and a beautiful display of pyro-technics are the important features of this festival.

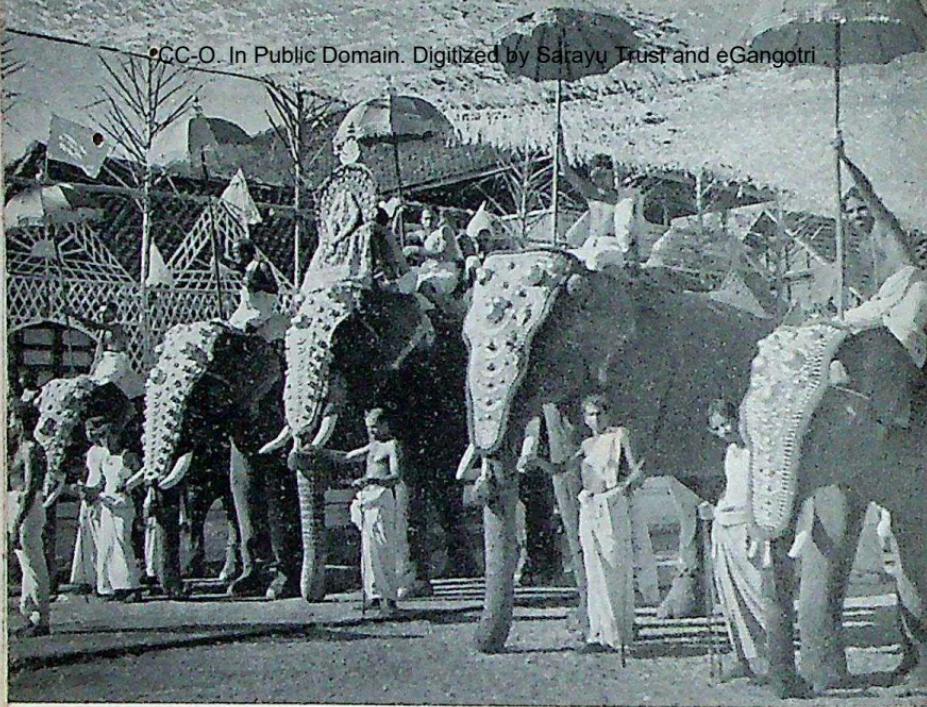
FISHERY

Fisheries play an important part in the economy of the State. The backwaters of Kerala provide excellent opportunities for fishing. One of the devices employed in catching fish is known as the Chinese net which originally came from China centuries ago. It is unique inasmuch as it is used only in this State in India.

'This structure consists of wooden rods to which a baited net is attached. It is lowered and raised by means of stone weights attached to the 'arm'. At night a light fixed to the central rod hangs just above the water when the net is lowered. It serves to attract fish into the net. Even today, there are a number of fishermen who use this peculiar device to catch fish.'

Fisheries Project: A new experiment in developing the coastal fisheries of the State, the first of its kind in India, is in progress at Neendakara on the Quilon-Alleppey road. As a result of a tripartite agreement signed between the UNO, the Government of India and the Government of Norway in October 1952, the Indo-Norwegian Fisheries Community Development Project was launched in 1953.

The introduction of mechanised boats in place of the traditional ones, called *Valloms*, was the first step towards increased coastal fishing. A storage plant, with a capacity of 25 tons of ice per day, 100 tons of fish and 125 tons of frozen fish and 6·7-ton freezing capacity in 42 hours, has already been completed and is in operation. The aim of the Project is to modernise the fishing industry for the benefit of 11,000 fishermen who inhabit the Shaktikulangara and Neendakara regions.



Richly caparisoned temple elephants

PLACES OF INTEREST

TRIVANDRUM

Trivandrum, capital of Kerala, has been built like Rome on hills. One cannot but be impressed by the numerous hills and hillocks on which stand magnificent buildings and parks, and the restful valleys dotted all over with coconut groves. The name of the city is derived from Thiruanantapuram, literally meaning 'the place of the sacred snake—Anant' and is connected with the origin of the temple of Sri Padmanabhaswami, one of the most important shrines in the city dedicated to Vishnu.

Alighting at the Trivandrum railway station or the airport, the visitor's eye will be caught by the magnificent temple of Sri Padmanabhaswami, better known as Ananthasayanam. This temple, with its elaborately sculptured seven-storey *gopuram* or tower-gate, is an exquisite specimen of South Indian architecture. The moderate height of the gateway, its lateral extension, the horizontal curvilinear roof with an upward tilt at either end and the sloping four-gabled sides of the top typify dignity, sobriety and restraint. The principal *mandapam* is the one known as Kulasekhar Mandapam having elaborate sculptures in granite. The exact date and details of the origin of this temple are obscured by antiquity. Legend has it that it was built long before the Christian era.

Massively compact, the seven storeys of the *gopuram* soar up, chiselled with beautiful sculpture. Some of its constructional details may stagger one's imagination. The temple corridor, for instance, is supported by 368 granite pillars, which are all sculptured. It took four thousand

Padmanabhaswami Temple, Trivandrum



masons, six thousand workers and a hundred elephants six months to complete the work. And the temple flag-staff, built of special teak later encased in gold, came from a site thirty miles away, without ever touching the ground—a colossal feat performed by elephants!

Trivandrum is a city of magnificent buildings of ancient and modern architecture and among these mention may be made of the Kaudiyar Palace, palaces of former rulers situated inside the Fort, the Legislative Chamber, the Secretariat, the Victoria Jubilee Town Hall, the General Hospital and the University buildings. Also well worth a visit are the Chitralayam (Art Gallery), the Zoo, the Aquarium and the Museum.

Opened in 1935, the Chitralayam has representative collections of ancient, medieval and modern paintings of the Rajput, Mughul and Tanjore schools. There are copies of the frescoes at Ajanta and Sigiriya, five specimens of the murals of Kerala, and many works of modern Indian painters. Valuable Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese and Balinese paintings further enhance the value of the Chitralayam collection.

The Museum with its central hall devoted to indigenous arts and crafts is probably one of the finest in the East. Its corridors and wings are devoted to natural history. Equally popular are the Public Park and the Zoo where the visitor will see some rare birds and animals from all climes.



The Trivandrum Museum

The Aquarium contains some of the rarest and most beautiful specimens of aquatic life. It serves the needs of the State's Department of Marine Biology and Fisheries and also constitutes an educational and recreational centre for the public. Considered the largest and most up to date of its kind in Asia, it has fish of all varieties and colour-combinations to delight the eye.

A few other places worth a visit are the Veli Lagoon, the Aruvikkara Water Works, the Kaudiyar Palace (residence of the former Maharaja), the Observatory and the University.

At Kovalam, a few miles from the city, the sheltered beach offers delightful bathing facilities.

Accommodation:

- (i) Western Style Hotel—Mascot Hotel.
- (ii) Rest House—for reservation write to the District Collector, Trivandrum.

Transport: Taxis and buses.

VARKALA AND ANJENGO

On the way along the coast to Quilon, but half-way between Trivandrum and Quilon, is Varkala or Janardhanam, a place of Hindu pilgrimage and noted for its mineral waters that gush out of the towering cliffs on the beach. At Varkala is Sivagiri, the *samadhi* of a great religious reformer, Sri Narayana Guru.

The temple bell at Varkala announcing the daily worship, they say, is a ship's bell presented by a Dutch captain. Long ago, the story runs, a Dutch ship was becalmed off the shore. The sails did not work—there was not even the whisper of a breeze for days on end. The captain finally sought the help of the temple priest.

" My ship's bell is for the temple ", he promised, " if there will be some wind for us to make a move on ". At evening worship that day, the priest offered special prayers. True enough, not long after nightfall, a gusty wind began to blow. And the grateful Dutch captain kept his word!

Two tunnels at Varkala, one of them nearly half a mile in length, complete the line of water communications between Trivandrum and Quilon. Nearby may be seen the fortress of Anjengo built by the early English settlers towards the end of the seventeenth century.

PUNALUR

The road from Trivandrum to Quilon passes through some of the most picturesque parts of the State. One may visit Punalur, headquarters of the Pathanapuram taluk on the Shencottah-Quilon Railway. Constructed in 1877, the suspension bridge across the Kallada river still attracts one's attention. Worth a visit are the paper mills and the plywood factory at Punalur.

QUILON

Quilon, a prosperous commercial town, 44 miles north of Trivandrum, has several claims to fame. It stands on the Ashtamudi Lake (lake with eight creeks), with its belt of palm trees and picturesque promontories of red laterite and china clay. The Thevally Palace and Government House add an air of ancient grandeur to the shores of the lagoon. From ancient times, ships of many nations have touched Quilon; among them were those of the Phoenicians, Persians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans and the Chinese. During the period of the Tang Dynasty, the Chinese had prosperous trade settlements at Quilon; and during the reign of Kublai Khan, the two countries had exchanged envoys. Exquisite chinaware, some of them very beautiful creations, have been discovered in this area.

And here it was, in 1330, that Friar Jordanus was consecrated Bishop of the first Roman Catholic See in India. In earlier times, Quilon had been sometimes independent or at others owed allegiance either to Cochin or to Travancore. It surrendered to the Travancore Raja in 1742.

A trip by motor launch from Quilon to Ernakulam through the backwaters fringed with coconut groves is most enjoyable.

From the Neendakara bridge, a distance of about ten miles from Quilon, one may have a most glorious view of the backwaters. The most beautiful part of the backwaters lies between Quilon and Alleppey.

About two miles from Quilon is Tangasseri, a beautiful picnic spot. It has a lighthouse, old Dutch, Portuguese and English cemeteries and some remnants of massive forts.

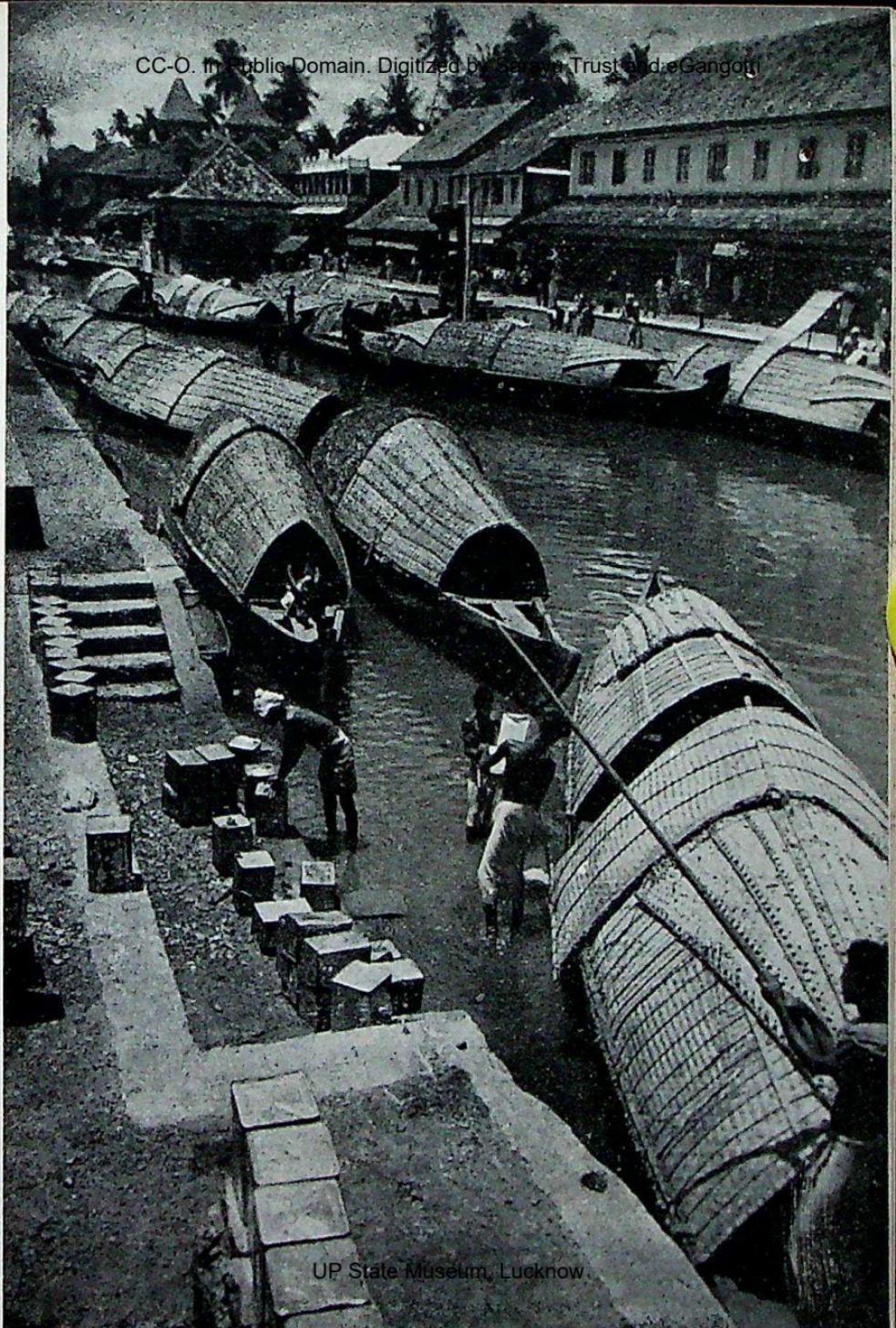
Quilon is fast developing into an industrial town. Industries such as ceramics, aluminium, textiles, paper and plywood have grown up in recent years.

Accommodation :

Government House—for reservation write to the Director, State Guest Department, Trivandrum.

Rest House—for reservation write to the Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Quilon.

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UP State Museum, Lucknow



Women sorting coir. Kerala is the home of coir industry.

Travellers' Bungalow—for reservation write to the
Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Quilon.

Transport: Taxis and rickshaws.

ALLEPPEY

Alleppey, just over 53 miles farther up north, is a busy industrial centre and port. It has been called the "Venice of the East" because of the many canals that meander through the town. Its industrial life-blood is coir, while its black pepper makes food tastier the world over.

A cruise in a launch in the backwaters or on the Vembanad Lake is very refreshing. The famous Neendakara bridge lies between Alleppey and Quilon. The tourist

may rest at the Government Rest House by the seaside, whence a fascinating view of Alleppey can be had.

Accommodation :

Dow's Bungalow—for reservation write to M/s. Darragh, Ismail and Co. Ltd., Post Box No. 50, Alleppey.

New Rest House—for reservation write to the Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Ernakulam.

Transport: Taxis and rickshaws.

PERIYAR WILD LIFE SANCTUARY

No visitor to Kerala should miss the Periyar Wild Life Sanctuary, one of the finest national parks in the country, 160 miles by road from Trivandrum via Kottayam, where there is a Government Rest House. Kottayam was once the capital of the Thekkumkoor Rajas and it is believed that the first English school was started here. A visit to the old Syrian church, known as Valia Palli, at Kottayam will be of interest to tourists.

Kottayam has been a great centre of Christian missionary activity. East of the town, a few miles away, lie the big plantations, the home of rubber, tea and coffee, in an undulating evergreen landscape. Today, Kottayam is a busy commercial centre of the plantation trade.

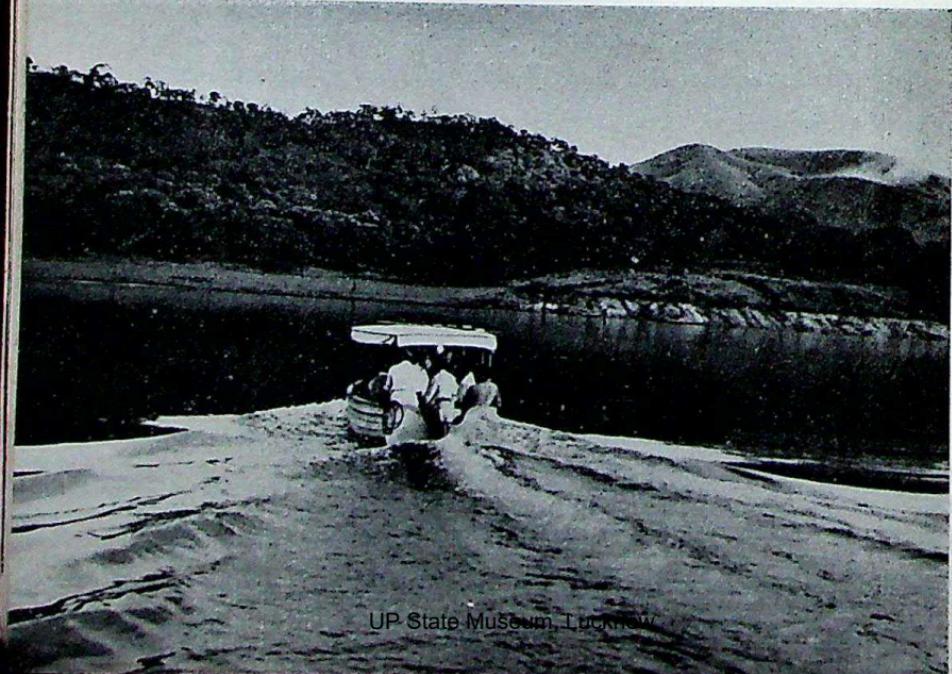
The road leading to the Periyar Wild Life Sanctuary, winds through the rich tea plantations. At Thekkady, one leaves the road and goes by a motor launch across the

Periyar Lake. The Lake is an artificial one, made by damming the Periyar, Kerala's longest river. While crossing the lake in a motor launch, one may get a glimpse of wild animals—elephants in herds of 15 or 20 from veteran tuskers down to baby-toddlers, the sambhar, the bison, the deer, and the panther—coming to the lake to quench their thirst.

In the three hundred square miles of forest, the wild animals are left to wander freely. All shooting is forbidden.

For the visitors all modern comforts for stay and rest are provided at the "Aranya Nivas" (Forest Lodge),

A cruise on the Periyar Lake



UP State Museum, Lucknow

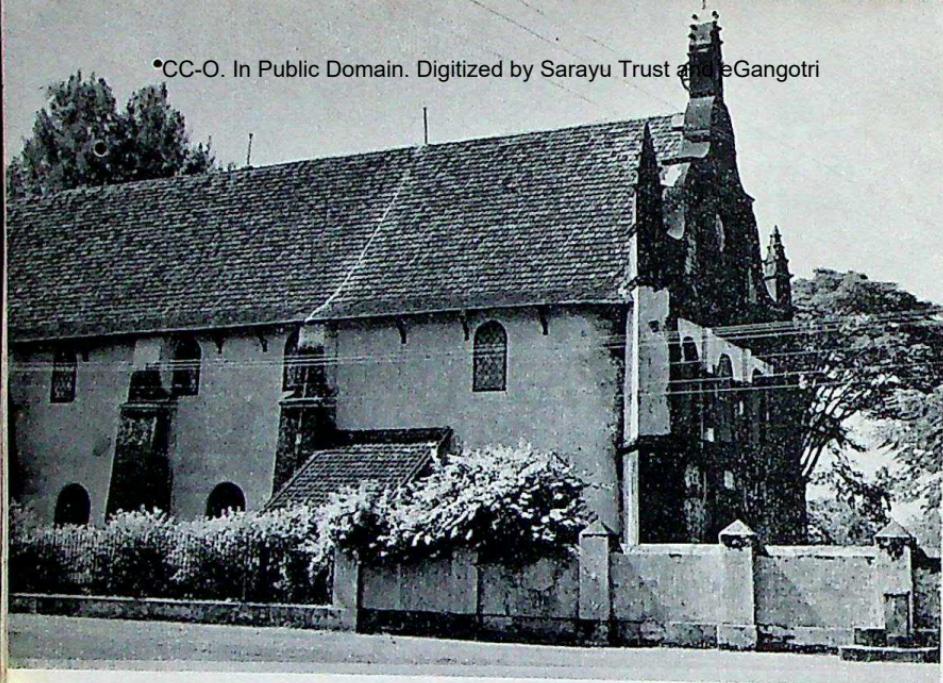
the new State Hotel at Thekkady, which is 135 miles by road from Cochin and 160 miles from Trivandrum.

COCHIN

Returning to Kottayam, Cochin is only three hours' journey by road. A fine natural harbour, palm-fringed lagoons, a beautiful view of the sea, wooded islands and the mainland opposite—that's Co..... At night, the twinkling lights of Ernakulam, the old capital of the former State of Cochin, on the mainland three miles away, and those on the bridge connecting Cochin and Ernakulam appear enchanting.

Cochin had contacts with the outside world from the remote past. The Chinese are believed to have been among the earliest settlers round the coast and had a flourishing trade. Little, however, remains today of their culture and tradition, except for the tell-tale Chinese fishing nets still to be seen in the fishing villages.

The colonies of Jews in Cochin are the oldest Jewish settlements in India. It is difficult to say exactly when the Jews first arrived in the country. During the reign of Solomon the Wise, it is said, a Phoenician fleet visited the coast and carried monkeys, peacocks, and ivory back with them. It seems quite probable that at that time some Jews might have settled down here for purposes of trade. However, the first wave of Jewish immigrants came to India subsequent to the occupation of Jerusalem and destruction of their temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C.



St. Francis' Church, Cochin Fort, the oldest European church in India

The second wave of immigrants came as a result of the persecution of Jews all over Europe and some of them fled and sought refuge in this region.

The sixteenth century saw the arrival of the Portuguese who established commercial enterprises and developed missionary activities in Cochin. The Portuguese settlement here is regarded as the first and oldest European settlement in India. Inside the Cochin Fort, there are two important churches—the Santa Cruz Cathedral and the St. Francis' Church, the oldest European church in India. The tomb of Vasco da Gama, the famous Portuguese sailor, will be of particular interest to tourists from

Europe and America. During the Dutch rule, which lasted a little over a century, Cochin attained great prosperity. After a short-lived conquest by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, Cochin eventually passed into the hands of the British, who annexed it in 1799.

Cochin has now made striking progress and is a major port with all ancillary facilities. Its approach channel has been so widened as to allow any ocean-going vessel to enter the harbour without difficulty even during the roughest weather. Its deep-water wharf, 2,200 ft. long, can now accommodate four vessels 450 ft. in length at a time. The port handles one and a half million tons of traffic annually.

Cochin is accessible by land, sea and air. A meter gauge line connecting Quilon and Ernakulam has recently been laid. Regular public ferry services operate between Cochin and the neighbouring towns of Ernakulam, Willingdon Island, Bolghatty Island and Mattancheri.

WILLINGDON ISLAND: This man-made island built entirely from the dredged material for deepening the port lies to the south-east of Cochin. The harbour is connected with the mainland by rail, road and air; and a ferry service plies for miles through the canals and backwaters. The island has assumed importance since it serves as a clearing house for all cargo traffic meant for the port of Cochin.

BOLGHATTY ISLAND: To the north-west of Ernakulam lies the Bolghatty Island known for its enchanting beauty



The Jewish synagogue, Mattancheri

and magnificent scenery. Formerly, it used to be the seat of the British Resident.

MATTANCHERI: Lying to the south-west of Cochin, Mattancheri is an important town with a history dating back to the beginning of the Christian era or even earlier. The two important sights worth a visit here are the Jewish Synagogue and the Dutch Palace. While one may see the Great Rolls of the Old Testament and the famous inscription of Bhaskara Ravi Varma in the Synagogue, the Dutch Palace contains a rich collection of mural paintings on its walls. Because of the many improvements made on it during the Dutch rule, the palace is known as the Dutch Palace, though it was the Portuguese who originally built it about the middle of the sixteenth century.

Accommodation :

Western Style Hotel—Malabar Hotel.

Rest House—for reservation write to the Collector,
Ernakulam District, Cochin Fort.

Transport: Taxis and buses.

VALLARPADAM

Near Bolghatty is Vallarpadam, an island where there stands an old church dedicated to St. Mary. It is also a place of Christian pilgrimage. Legend has it that St. Mary saved a Hindu lady, who had been drowned here, by her miraculous powers.

TRIPUNITHURA

Seat of the former ruling family of Cochin, Tripunithura lies six miles south-east of Ernakulam. Its numerous palaces and the Sri Purnathrayeesa temple are the chief attractions today. Destroyed by fire in 1920, the shrine was built anew. A mile and a half to the east is the Hill Palace and three miles further still is Chottanikkara, noted for its famous Bhagavathi temple.

MULANTHURUTHI

About four miles south of Chottanikkara is Mulanthuruthi, one of the principal centres of the Jacobite Syrians in this part of the State. Here, there is an old church built 700 years ago; it contains beautiful frescoes, which are perhaps the earliest specimens of the work of foreign artists in this area.

NARAKKAL

Back to Ernakulam, one may proceed a few miles west of the backwaters and arrive at Narakkal. Here is the famous Veliyattaparambil temple, where trial by ordeal with red-hot iron or molten lead used to be conducted till the end of the eighteenth century. Here also is a fish pond maintained by the Government. A few miles away stands a Siva temple, which is visited by the devout on Sivarathri day.

ALWAYE

Beyond Cochin, about ten miles up north again, is Alwaye, a typical industrial town, puffing smoke from paper, chemical, fertilizer, aluminium and glass factories, and rayon and textile mills. The Periyar river flows by the town. In the hot, humid months from March to May, Alwaye serves as a summer resort.

When the conquering army of Tipu Sultan fought on the banks of the Periyar in 1790, in a determined bid to subjugate Travancore, it was the river with its turbulent monsoon flood that forced the invader to call off the battle.

Alwaye has the distinction of having the only Christian college—the Union Christian College—started by the Indian leaders of the community, while in almost all other areas similar institutions have sprung up as a result of foreign missionary activity.

Recently, a factory, the Rare Earths Ltd., was set up at Alwaye for the processing of monazite. This important mineral is found in the beach-sands of Kerala and is a rich source of thorium and also contains traces of uranium.

KALADI

On the banks of the Alwaye river stands Kaladi, birth-place of Sri Sankaracharya, the great *Advaita* philosopher and religious reformer of India. There are two temples here. An image of Sri Adi Sankaracharya is installed in one of them and in the second temple is placed an image of the Mutt's tutelar deity, Saradamba. Near the Saradamba temple is a striking monument to mark the spot where Sankaracharya's mother was cremated. Nearby is a temple dedicated to Lord Krishna; its idol is believed to have been installed by Sankaracharya himself. Kaladi is reached from Alwaye by road or by train, which goes up to Ankamali, about four miles by road from Kaladi.

KODUNGALLOOR

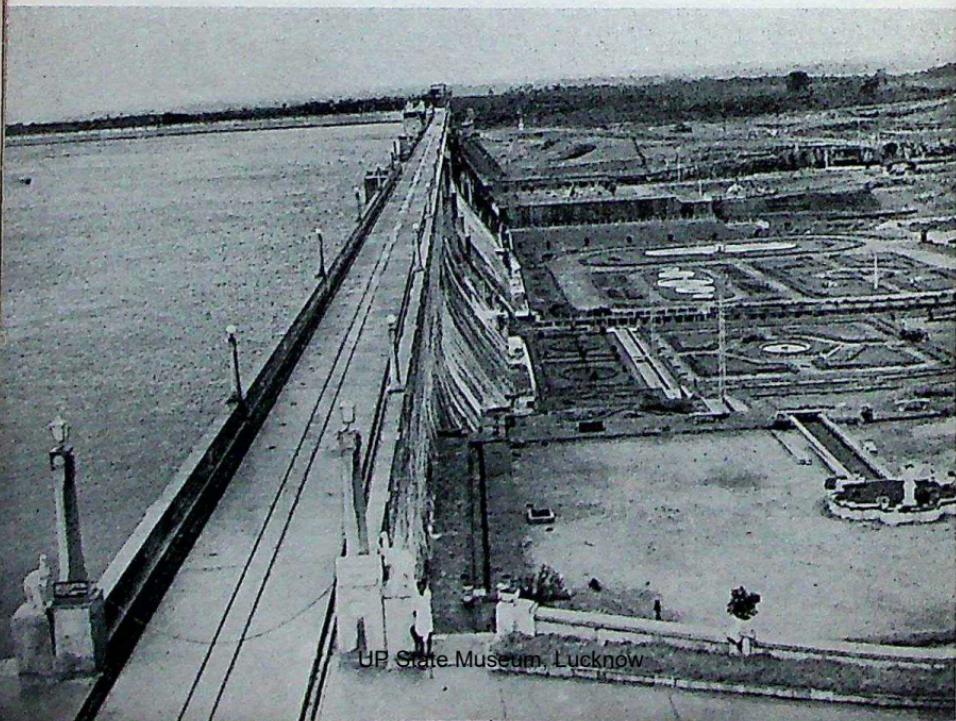
Kodungalloor, formerly known as Cranganore, six miles to the north-west of Chennamangalam on the Alwaye river, can be reached by boat, road or rail. The nearest railway station is Irinjalakuda. It was the capital of the Cheraman Perumals and the first seaport in Kerala to which came ships from many parts of the world. Phoenicians, Romans, Grecians, Portuguese, Dutch and the English had trade connections with this place. The Portuguese built a fort here.

A number of temples are to be found here; the most important are the Thiruvanchikulam and the Bhagavathi. Near the former stands Cheraman Paramba, believed to have been the residence of the Perumals. The latter is known for its 'Bharani' festival in March-April which attracts thousands of worshippers from all parts of Kerala.

The first mosque built in India is also situated here. It faces east, unlike others which face west.

Kottappuram, near Kodungalloor, is believed to be the spot where St. Thomas the Apostle landed in India. There is also a church dedicated to him here.

The Malampuzha Dam, Palghat district



TRICHUR

Farther up north by road or rail lies Trichur. The Zoo and Museum here are worth a visit. Famous for its reptile house, the Zoo is considered to be one of the best in India. A few hours can be profitably spent in the art section of the Jubilee Town Hall. The Vadakkunnathan temple is one of the oldest shrines. It is said that Sri Sankaracharya breathed his last within the precincts of this temple. Trichur celebrates annually its Pooram festival, which falls usually in April-May. It is a mammoth spectacle with arrays of richly caparisoned elephants, processions, and amazing pyro-technic displays. Other places worth a visit are the old palace and the fort built during the time of Tipu Sultan's invasion.

Accommodation: Central Hotel, Travellers' Bungalow, Peechi House.

Transport: Taxis, buses and auto-rickshaws.

KOZHIKODE

Formerly known as Calicut, this pleasant seaside town is accessible by train from Trichur *via* Shoranur. The visitor now proceeding northwards leaves behind him an area formerly known as Travancore-Cochin and enters the two northern districts of the area which were known as Malabar till 1956. The journey takes him through groves of coconut palms, past tea and coffee gardens, rubber plantations, banana groves, and jackfruit trees. It was for many years the seat of the ruling chief called the Zamorin, a title which is derived from the old name of

Samutiri, or sea-lord. A large number of its inhabitants are the Maplahs, who are Muslims. Kozhikode has many mosques and schools. Cotton cloth was formerly sold here in large quantities and hence it became known as Calico. It was one of the great ports on the West Coast in the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is a business centre and a port of call for cargo steamers even today.

Kozhikode was one of the first ports of India visited by Europeans, the Portuguese adventurer, Covilham, being the first to land in 1486. Trade, however, began with the arrival here of Vasco da Gama on May 20, 1498, after his famous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. The English connection with the town dates from 1615. Kozhikode suffered badly during the Mysore Wars of 1773 and 1788 and it passed finally into the possession of the English East India Company by the Treaty of Seringapatam concluded with Tipu Sultan in 1792. The palace of the Zamorin was set fire to by the Zamorin himself during the seige of the town by Hyder Ali in 1766.

Accommodation: Beach Hotel, Alakapuri Guest House, Travellers' Bungalow.

Transport: Taxis, buses and auto-rickshaws.

CANNANORE

From Kozhikode, the tourist should again take the train due north to Cannanore, a few hours' journey along the sea-coast. The route is lined by rows of tall waving palms, while the rolling waves of the Arabian Sea are apt to lull the traveller into a responsive, receptive mood. It

used to be the capital of the Kolattiri Raja, chief rival of the Zamorin; it was also an important emporium of trade with Arabia and Persia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Portuguese established one of their earliest settlements here. Vasco da Gama touched here in 1498 and in 1501 Cabral founded a factory. Almeyda built a fort in 1505. The fort and factory were annexed by the Dutch in the middle of the 17th century; in 1790, the English captured the fort and Cannanore remained their military headquarters till 1887, when the headquarters were transferred to the Nilgiris.

Cannanore has now lost a good deal of its importance as a trade centre; its chief exports are pepper, salted fish and cotton fabrics; rice and cotton yarn are the main imports.

CHERUTHURUTHI

On the way from Trichur to Shoranur, a distance of 20 miles, is Cheruthuruthi, the seat of Kerala Kalamandalam, the famous dance-centre which was started by Kerala's great poet, the late Vallathol. It has had outstanding teachers such as Kunchu Kurup and Ravunni Menon and has produced a number of well-known dancers, like Krishnan Nayar, Raman Kutty and Gopinath, to name but a few.



APPENDIX
TRIVANDRUM

I. General Information:

- (a) Area .. 98 sq. milcs.
- (b) Population .. 3,71,001.
- (c) Altitude .. Sea level.
- (d) Climate .. Average temperature Max. 35°C. Min. 21°C.
Rainfall—25''.
Season—November to February.
- (e) Type of clothing required Light tropical and cotton clothing throughout the year.
- (f) Languages .. Malayalam and English.

II. Communications and Transport:

(a) DISTANCES:

		<i>By air</i>	<i>By rail</i>	<i>By road</i>
Bangalore	..	342 miles	734 miles (via. Madras)	708 miles (via Madras)
Cochin	..	111 miles	..	137·5 miles
Madras	..	513 miles	512 miles	486 miles
Coimbatore	..	203 miles	..	289 miles
Delhi (via Madras)	..	1,656 miles	1,873 miles	2,012 miles
Calcutta (via Madras)	..	1,379 miles	1,544 miles	1,531 miles
Bombay	..	797 miles	1,479 miles (via Madras)	1,339 miles (via Madras)

- (b) INTERNAL TRANSPORT: Taxis and buses available. Taxi rates are 50 nP. per mile and Rs. 2/- detention charges per hour.

III. Accommodation:

- (i) WESTERN STYLE HOTEL: Mascot Hotel. Charges for a single room are Rs. 17/- to Rs. 25/- and for a double Rs. 35/- inclusive of board and lodging.

(ii) REST HOUSE: For reservation apply to the District Collector, Trivandrum.

IV. Miscellaneous:

(a) PROHIBITION: In force
 (b) INFORMATION CENTRE: Department of Public Relations, State Guest Department.
 (c) GUIDE SERVICE: Available from State Guest Department.
 (d) EXCURSION: Kanya Kumari (Cape Comorin) 54 miles by road.

QUILON

I. General Information:

(a) Area .. 147 sq. miles.
 (b) Population .. 3,97,760.
 (c) Altitude .. Sea level
 (d) Climate .. Average temperature, Max. 35°C. Min. 24°C.
 Rainfall—110".
 (e) Type of clothing required Light tropical and cotton clothing throughout the year.
 (f) Languages .. Malayalam and English.

II. Communications and Transport:

(a) DISTANCES:

	<i>By air</i>	<i>By rail</i>	<i>By road</i>
Cochin	92 miles
Trivandrum	..	41 miles	44 miles
Madras	..	471 miles	..

(b) INTERNAL TRANSPORT: Taxi rates are 62 nP. per mile and Rs. 2/- detention charges per hour. Rickshaws—25 nP. per mile. Boats (40 to 60-seater) may be hired for going around the Ashtamudi Lake; charges are Rs. 40/- per hour.

III. Accommodation:

- (i) GOVERNMENT HOUSE: For reservation apply to the Director, State Guest Department, Trivandrum.
- (ii) REST HOUSE: For reservation apply to the Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Quilon.
- (iii) TRAVELLERS' BUNGALOW For reservation apply to the Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Quilon.
- (iv) INDIAN STYLE HOTELS: Sea View Hotel, Anand Bhavan.

IV. Miscellaneous:

PROHIBITION: Not in force.

PERIYAR WILD LIFE SANCTUARY**I. General Information:**

- (a) Area .. 300 sq. miles.
- (b) Altitude .. 3,300 ft.
- (c) Climate .. Average temperature Max. 29·5°C. Min. 15·5°C.
Average rainfall—80".
- (d) Type of clothing required Light woollen clothing in winter and cotton clothing in summer.

II. Communications and Transport:

(a) DISTANCES:

	<i>By air</i>	<i>By rail</i>	<i>By road</i>
Cochin	135 miles
Trivandrum	160 miles
Madurai	88 miles
Madras	390 miles

- (b) INTERNAL TRANSPORT: Taxis are available at Cochin, Trivandrum, Madurai and Kumili for a trip to the Sanctuary.

III. Accommodation:

(i) WESTERN STYLE HOTEL Hotel Aranya Nivas, Thekkady, Charges for a single room are Rs. 25/- to Rs. 30/- and Rs. 40/- for two people in a double room. These rates are inclusive of board and lodging.

(ii) GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, EDAPALAYAM For reservation apply to the Superintendent, State Guest Department of Kerala, Trivandrum.

IV. Miscellaneous:

(a) PROHIBITION: Not in force.

(b) GUIDE: The Game Ranger can provide one of the game lawn guards to act as a guide.

(c) FISHING: The Manager, Hotel Aranya Nivas, issues temporary permits for hotel residents for fishing in the Periyar Lake.

(d) BOATING: One launch is available with Hotel Aranya Nivas, and one with Edapalayam Guest House. The Game Department has a boat.

COCHIN

I. General Information:

(a) Area .. 3 sq. miles. Ernakulam 11 sq. miles.
 (b) Population 80,000. Ernakulam 1,00,000.
 (c) Altitude Sea level.
 (d) Climate .. Average temperature Max. 35°C. Min. 20°C.
 Rainfall—100".
 (e) Type of clothing required Light tropical and cotton clothing required throughout the year.
 (f) Languages .. Malayalam and English.

II. Communications and Transport:

(a) DISTANCES:

		<i>By air</i>	<i>By rail</i>	<i>By road</i>
Bombay	..	686 miles	1,237 miles	1,292.2 miles
Bangalore	..	231 miles	665 miles	371 miles
Coimbatore	..	92 miles	135 miles	124 miles
Madras	..	402 miles	443 miles	439.2 miles
Calcutta	..	1,268 miles (via Madras)	1,475 miles (via Madras)	1,484 miles (via Madras)
Delhi	..	1,394 miles (via Bombay)	1,804 miles (via Madras)	1,965 miles (via Madras)

(b) INTERNAL TRANSPORT: Taxis and buses are available. Taxi rates are 50 nP. per mile and detention charges Rs. 2/- per hour.

III. Accommodation:

(i) WESTERN STYLE HOTEL

Malabar Hotel. Charges for a single room are Rs. 22/- and Rs. 42/- to Rs. 48/- for a double room, inclusive of board and lodging.

(ii) INDIAN STYLE HOTELS

Sea Green Hotel, Terminus Hotel, Breeze Hotel, New Woodland Hotel.

(iii) REST HOUSE:

For reservation apply to the Collector, Cochin District, Cochin Fort.

IV. Miscellaneous:

(a) PROHIBITION:

Not in force.

(b) INFORMATION CENTRE

Government of India Tourist Information Office, Willingdon Island, Cochin.

(c) GUIDE SERVICE:

Guides are available from the Government of India Tourist Information Office.



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IN INDIA

TELEPHONE

1.	Government of India Tourist Office, 123, Queen's Road, Churchgate, Bombay	..	242144-5
2.	Government of India Tourist Office, 13, Old Court House Street, Calcutta	..	23-2889 and 23-2819
3.	Government of India Tourist Office, 88, Janpath, New Delhi	..	40706, 48649 and 42742
4.	Government of India Tourist Office, 35, Mount Road, Madras	..	86249
5.	Government of India Tourist Office, The Mall, Agra	..	377
6.	Government of India Tourist Office, Krishna Villas, Station Road, Aurangabad	..	17
7.	Government of India Tourist Office, 15-B, The Mall, Banaras Cantt.	..	189
8.	Government of India Tourist Office, 16-A, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore	..	4505
9.	Government of India Tourist Office, Willingdon Island, Cochin	..	
10.	Government of India, Tourist Office, Chaurastha, Darjeeling	..	50
11.	Government of India Tourist Office, Rajasthan State Hotel, Jaipur	..	1182
12.	Government of India Tourist Office, Plot No. 5, Hamidia Road, Bhopal.	..	



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